

## Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01 SAJ-01 DRC-01 /136 W

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R 231931Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8876

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION BERLIN

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL BREMEN

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AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: SCHEEL SEEMS LIKELY NEXT FRG PRESIDENT:

POSSIBLE FDP LEADERSHIP CHANGES

REF: BONN 16646

SUMMARY: INFORMED SOURCES IN BONN INDICATE THAT FONMIN  
SCHEEL WILL, IN ALL LIKELIHOOD, BE THE SUCCESSOR TO FRG  
PRESIDENT HEINEMANN WHO RECENTLY ANNOUNCED HIS DECISION  
NOT TO ACCEPT ANOTHER TERM IN OFFICE. IF SCHEEL DOES  
MAKE THIS MOVE, IT IS LIKELY THAT INTERIOR MINISTER  
GENSCHER WILL STEP INTO SCHEEL'S SHOES AS FDP PARTY  
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CHAIRMAN AND POSSIBLY ALSO AS FOREIGN MINISTER.

GENSCHER'S ASSUMPTION OF EITHER OR BOTH THESE JOBS WOULD NOT NECESSARILY MAKE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COALITION PARTIES ANY EASIER. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT HEINEMANN'S RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE WILL NOT ACCEPT ANOTHER TERM IN OFFICE HAS LED TO MORE POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN BONN THAN HAS BEEN APPARENT FOR MANY MONTHS. SOME OF THE DUST HAS SETTLED, AND IT NOW SEEMS LIKELY THAT FONMIN SCHEEL, WHO IS ALSO FDP PARTY CHAIRMAN, WILL OPT TO BE HEINEMANN'S SUCCESSOR. THE JOB IS ESSENTIALLY A PROTOCOLARY AND REPRESENTATIONAL ONE, ALTHOUGH IT CAN AND DOES SERVE THE USEFUL FUNCTION OF GIVING THE GERMANS A NEEDED FATHER FIGURE WHO STANDS ABOVE PETTY PARTY POLITICS.

2. USUALLY WELL-INFORMED SOURCES HAVE TOLD US THAT SCHEEL HAS PRETTY MUCH MADE UP HIS MIND TO SEEK THE PRESIDENTIAL SLOT BECAUSE OF THE UNCERTAINTY ABOUT HIS HEALTH. HE WILL UNDERGO A KIDNEY STONE OPERATION IN MID-DECEMBER (HIS SECOND THIS YEAR) AND DOES NOT BELIEVE, APPARENTLY, THAT HIS PROSPECTS FOR RETURNING QUICKLY TO FULL HEALTH ARE GOOD. IT IS REPORTED THAT SCHEEL DISCUSSED HIS FUTURE WITH CHANCELLOR BRANDT SOME TEN DAYS AGO AND THE LATTER AGREED TO SUPPORT SCHEEL FOR PRESIDENT. SCHEEL IS SAID NOW TO BE IN THE FINAL STAGES OF MAKING HIS DECISION. ANY MOVE TO GIVE UP HIS PARTY POSITION AND FOREIGN MINISTRY JOB WOULD PROBABLY COME NEXT SPRING, IN TIME TO TAKE UP THE PRESIDENCY IN JULY.

3. ONE THING SEEMS CLEAR. IF SCHEEL STEPS INTO THE PRESIDENCY, HE WILL BE SUCCEDED AS FDP PARTY CHAIRMAN BY THE PRESENT INTERIOR MINISTER, GENSCHER. THE PRESENT WIDESPREAD SPECULATION IN KNOWLEDGEABLE BONN POLITICAL CIRCLES IS THAT GENSCHER WOULD ALSO TAKE OVER THE FOREIGN MINISTER POSITION AS WELL.

4. THERE ARE ALSO REPORTS OF SUPPORT IN SOME SPD CIRCLE FOR BRANDT'S FOREIGN POLICY ADVISER, EGON BAHR, AS SCHEEL'S SUCCESSOR IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE. IT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IS DIFFICULT TO FIND ANYBODY IN BONN WHO TAKES THIS IDEA SERIOUSLY. ONE STRONG SPD SUPPORTER NOTED THAT BAHR IS ALREADY THE LIGHTNING ROD FOR THE OPPOSITION, AS WELL AS PARTS OF THE FDP AND EVEN OF THE SPD. HIS ELEVATION TO FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD SIMPLY ADD TO BRANDT'S TROUBLES IF, AS IS PRACTICALLY CERTAIN, BAHR HAD TO FACE THE INTENSIFIED PRESSURE AND CRITICISM FROM A WIDE SEGMENT OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM THAT WOULD

COME WITH HIS ASSUMPTION OF A MUCH MORE EXPOSED JOB  
THAN HE HAS AT PRESENT.

5. OUR SOURCES HAVE NOTED THAT IF GENSCHER DOES ASSUME  
THE FOREIGN MINISTER JOB, THEN THE WAY MAY BE PAVED FOR  
A SLIGHT SHAKEUP IN THE CABINET. ONE INFORMED JOURNALIS  
HAS TOLD US THAT PRESENT MINISTER OF POST AND TELE-  
COMMUNICATIONS, EHMKE, MIGHT MOVE INTO THE INTERIOR  
MINISTER JOB. THIS SORT OF MUSICAL CHAIRS WOULD OPEN

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UP OTHER POSITIONS.

6. COMMENT: WHETHER OR NOT ALL OF THESE CHANGES OCCUR, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT GENSCHER IS ASSUMING AN EVER LARGER ROLE IN THE FDP AND THE COALITION. HE HAS EMERGED INCREASINGLY IN THE LAST YEAR AS THE FDP STRONGMAN AND OBVIOUS HEIR-APPARENT TO SCHEEL. IN FACT, AT THE RECENT FDP CONVENTION IN WIESBADEN (BONN 16596), IT WAS GENSCHER WHO WAS RUNNING THE SHOW AND ACTING VERY MUCH LIKE A MAN READY TO TAKE OVER THE TOP JOB AT ANY MOMENT. THE FEELING IN BONN IS THAT GENSCHER COULD PROVE TO BE A DIFFICULT PARTNER FOR BRANDT, BOTH IN THE BROAD COALITION SENSE AND IN THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS FIELD. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HE IS LESS POLISHED THAN SCHEEL AND IS A TOUGHER, MORE AGGRESSIVE AND MORE CONSERVATIVE POLITICIAN. IN PARTICULAR, HIS HANDLING OF FOREIGN POLICY MAY PROVE TROUBLESOME TO BRANDT, WHO FOUND THAT HIS AND SCHEEL'S VIEWS IN THIS AREA WERE GENERALLY SIMILAR. GENSCHER'S EYE MAY BE MORE FOCUSED ON THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF CERTAIN FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES (E.G. DIFFICULTIES ON RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS/EES OVER BERLIN) THAN WAS SCHEEL'S. THE POTENTIAL FOR A MORE AWKWARD RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COALITION PARTIES SEEMS TO US FAIRLY LARGE. SCHEEL'S MOVING UPWARD MAY NOT BRING TRANQUILLITY, THEREFORE, TO AN ALREADY JUMPY SPD LEADERSHIP. HILLENBRAND

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESIDENT, PARTY LEADERS, POLITICAL LEADERS, POLITICAL PARTIES, ELECTIONS, REORGANIZATIONS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 23 NOV 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** garlanwa  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Subject:** SCHEEL SEEMS LIKELY NEXT FRG PRESIDENT: POSSIBLE FDP LEADERSHIP CHANGES  
**TAGS:** PINT, GE, (SCHEEL, WALTER), (GENSCHER, HANS-DIETRICH)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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